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Cease-Fire Developments

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29 June 1973

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Cease-Fire Developments

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CONTENTS

29 June 1973

CAMBODIAThe Military Situation

Communist attacks on 28 June drove a two-battalion government force from the town of Bathoay on Route 6 some 30 miles north of Phnom Penh. The nearby town of Phaav had fallen to insurgents on 27 June, and a ten-mile stretch of Route 6 is now in enemy hands. Communist forces have returned to the offensive on Route 5 south of Kompong Chhnang, and Phnom Penh is again cut off from the rice stocks in the northwest. Government reinforcements today began moving to reopen Route 5 and blunt the insurgent drive on Route 6.

South of Phnom Penh government troops have made little progress in clearing Routes 3 and 201.

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Meanwhile, another truck convoy arrived in Phnom Penh today over Route 4, but Communist units are edging closer to the highway town of Kompong Speu, and this road could be closed at any time.

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LAOSThe Military Situation

Nearly all the minor incidents during the eighteenth week of the cease-fire occurred in central Laos. The most significant fighting took place several miles east of Thakhek, where Communist units drove a government company from its position.

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To the north, Communist troops continue to pursue 400 local defense troops and refugees fleeing from the San Soak enclave not far from the North Vietnamese border.

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SOUTH VIETNAMSaigon - Viet Cong Talks

Both the Thieu government and the Viet Cong issued new peace proposals at the 28 June session of their bilateral talks in Paris--the first such meeting in nearly a month. Neither side has altered its basic position very much, however, and the talks are likely to remain deadlocked.

The Thieu government has proposed the creation of four commissions to consider various aspects of the problem, and has offered a new timetable for a settlement culminating in general elections next December. President Thieu reportedly has ordered Saigon's negotiators to continue to press for early elections and to insist that the question of how such elections are organized must be settled before any Council of National Reconciliation and Concord can be created. For its part, the Viet Cong is still emphasizing the need for "democratic freedoms" in South Vietnam and calling for an early agreement on military issues and the return of detained personnel.

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Saigon on Aid to Phnom Penh

A South Vietnamese Foreign Ministry official has privately indicated that recent Saigon press stories suggesting military action in Cambodia by South Vietnamese forces were exaggerated. The official said that Saigon's position was accurately presented in a recent statement by Foreign Minister Lam that the government would consider a Cambodian request for aid. The Foreign Ministry official also said that in the past Saigon had turned down several Cambodian requests for military aid.

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